



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NEWS
The Monthly Electronic Newsletter of
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February 2013



A storm surge washes over the seawall at Hampton Beach on Saturday, Feb 9. The Seacoast suffered the only significant damage in New Hampshire from the February blizzard.

WMUR-TV photo

BLIZZARD SHUTS DOWN NEW ENGLAND – It's been a few years, but an old fashioned nor'easter bore down on New England on Feb. 8, bringing strong winds and piling up record or near-record snowfalls in many communities. But the only significant damage in New Hampshire was along the coast, where the storm tide damaged the Hampton Beach seawall and tossed debris onto coastal roads. Snowfall totals in the state ranged from about one foot in the North Country to nearly three feet in parts of the Seacoast and Monadnock Region.

The snow started falling on Thursday morning and hundreds of schools cancelled classes on Friday. Gov. Maggie Hassan declared a state of emergency and issued a call for people to head for home by 7 p.m. Friday to wait out the storm, a plea that was widely heeded. State Police reported that traffic on all the major highways was way down by mid-afternoon. The State Emergency Operations Center was opened Friday afternoon, but the storm ended the following day with little damage was reported. The possibility of power outages from high wind gusts never materialized. Public works and DOT crews worked into the following week to clear the roads and haul away mountains of snow.

Another storm on the weekend of Feb. 23/24 also dumped more than a foot of snow on parts of the state. Rochester got 15.5 inches. Milton got 15 inches. Chichester and Canterbury each got 14 inches. Although this was a heavy, wet snow it did not cause major problems. There were scattered power outages around the state, mainly due to trees and branches on wires, but power was quickly restored in most areas. WMUR-TV reported that the month was the third snowiest February on record, with an accumulation of 41.1 inches at the Concord Airport. And the month isn't over.

SARAH M. LONG BRIDGE KNOCKED OUT OF SERVICE – The Sarah M. Long Bridge, one of three spans across the Piscataqua River at Portsmouth, was knocked out of service for five days when its lift span malfunctioned. The lift span got stuck on the afternoon of Jan. 23, leaving it about a foot higher than the roadway. That blocked both vehicle and marine traffic. The blockage was more than an inconvenience. With the new Memorial Bridge under construction and the Long Bridge out of service, that left only the I-95 high bridge as a means for crossing the river. Residents of Portsmouth and New Castle would have to evacuate to Maine in the event of an accident at the Seabrook Station nuclear power plant, so HSEM filed a compensatory evacuation plan. Detour signs already in place would have guided residents of the two communities to the I-95 bridge. In addition to the potential evacuation problem, the stuck bridge prevented the transit of fuel gas tankers and other marine traffic to the Piscataqua River. DOT personnel made repairs and tested the lift span over the weekend of Jan. 26/27 and it was returned to service on Sunday.

The Sarah M. Long Bridge was opened in 1940 and carries about 16,000 vehicles per day. It is on the state's Red List of bridges that need to be replaced.

N.H. FLU SEASON MORE SEVERE THAN NORMAL - The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Division of Public Health Services (DPHS) reports that New Hampshire is experiencing a more severe than usual influenza season. DPHS is reporting flu-related deaths in New Hampshire this season are at 38 as of Feb. 25, which is the highest number of flu-related deaths in a single season the state has recorded since 1997. DPHS is also reporting the season's first pediatric death in the state related to flu this season. The victim was a child less than five years of age. DPHS recommends getting a flu vaccination and taking other steps to prevent the spread of the disease, such as washing your hands often, staying home from work or school if you're sick, covering your coughs and sneezes, get plenty of rest and eat a healthy diet. The flu season can extend into May.

For more information on influenza and the vaccine, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at www.cdc.gov or the DHHS website at www.dhhs.nh.gov. To get the flu vaccine, contact your healthcare provider or visit a local pharmacy.

DHS LAUNCHES ACTIVE SHOOTER WEBSITE – In the wake of recent mass shooting incidents, the Department of Homeland Security has set up a new website to provide resources on responding to active shooter incidents. The website is intended for public safety personnel and the general public. It includes research on shooting incidents and access to online training. The site address is: <http://www.dhs.gov/active-shooter-preparedness>.

RED CROSS TO HONOR EIGHT HEROS – Red Cross New Hampshire will honor eight people who have made a significant impact on their communities or displayed selfless heroism at the annual Hero's Breakfast on Thursday, March 7. Among those to be honored are Milford High School seniors Molly Mendola and Andrew Meyers for saving two people from a rip tide at Hampton Beach in May of 2012; Jon Worrall, a retired Sergeant First Class in the Army, who turned his retirement camp into a retreat to help wounded veterans; and Greenland Police Chief Mike Maloney who was killed at the scene of a drug bust last spring that turned violent. Chief Maloney placed himself in harm's way as he intervened to help wounded officers. The breakfast will be held at Southern New Hampshire University starting at 7:30 a.m.

DEADLINE APPROACHES FOR SBA DISASTER LOANS – The deadline is March 15 for private non-profit organizations in Cheshire County that suffered economic injury during flooding last May 29-31 to apply for low interest loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration. Eligible organizations include food kitchens, homeless shelters, libraries or community centers. Loans may be used to help meet working capital needs such as ongoing operating expenses. Applicants may apply online using the Electronic Loan Application via SBA's secure website at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>.

FIREFIGHTERS TRAINED IN SURVIVAL AND COLD WATER RESCUE – A total of 240 firefighters have been trained thus far in an International Association of Fire Fighters Fire Ground Survival course at the N.H. Fire Academy. Sixty firefighters each were trained during the three-day course offered twice during January. Individual stations, with the help of Academy staff, have been implementing the training around the state. For some firefighters this training has served as a refresher course while others are being exposed to the program for the first time.

Fire Academy instructors led Ice/Cold Water Training for nearly 30 firefighters who participated in the training during weekends of January 26-27, February 2-3, and February 9-10.

Keep up with emergency preparedness information in New Hampshire on www.readynh.nh.gov and [Twitter.com/ReadyNH](https://twitter.com/ReadyNH). For information on upcoming training and classes go to: <http://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/fstems/training/schedtrdates.html>